

[10 December, 1999]

RAJYA SABHA

(c) Formation work has been partly completed in 22 km (16 km from Tamluk end and 6 km from Digha end). 6 nos. minor bridges and the substructure of one major bridge over river Haldi have also been completed. Tenders for balance earthwork, minor/major bridges, ballast supply and permanent way are being invited and will be finalised expeditiously.

(d) and (e) The tentative schedule of completion of the project is December, 2000.

Ban on sale of Cigarettes and Beedis on platforms

1091. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to ban the sale of cigarettes and beedis on railway platforms and passenger trains; and

(b) if so, by when it would be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Sale of Cigarettes/beedis on railway platforms/premises and in trains has been banned with effect from 5th June, 1999.

Renovation of Railway Stations in Gujarat

1092. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating construction of new buildings for railway stations in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of railway stations modernised/renovated during the last three years and those proposed for renovation during the year 1999-2000?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Work of construction of new station buildings at Gandhinagar and Anand have been sanctioned costing Rs. 46.11 lakh and Rs. 39.58 lakh respectively. The work at Anand has already commenced and the work at Gandhinagar will commence after finalisation of plans and estimates.

(c) Modernisation/renovation is a continuous process and is taken up wherever required depending upon availability of funds and relative priority of works. Improvement works have been taken up at following stations during the last three years.

1996-97— Kim, Maninagar, Rajkot, Dhola Jn. and Ahmedabad.

1997-98— Sayan, Gandhinagar, Godhra, Dahod, Rajkot and Jamnagar.

1998-99—Vadodara, Billimora, Valsad, Navsarai, Gothamgam, Kosad, Kudsad, Mehmabad, Anand, Nadiad, Ahmedabad, Barejadi, Dahod and Hapa.

During 1999-2000 improvement works at the following stations have been taken up:—Navsari, Vapi, Billimora, Lakhbawal, Lalpur Jam and Bavla.

In addition Surat, Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Rajkot and Bhavnagar stations has been selected for development at model stations.

C.A.G, report of performance of Railways

1093. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that, in its annual report submitted to Government, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has highlighted the casual attitudes of the Railway administration to the problem of safety in the Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the CAG has also stressed the need for allocation more funds and manpower and more effective utilisation of the existing grant; if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps contemplated by Government to boost up the overall performance of the Railways in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) The Comptroller and Auditor General of India presented his Report No. 9 of 1999 pertaining to Union Government (Railways) for the year ended March, 1998 to the Parliament on 29.10.1999. This report includes a chapter containing his observations on various